

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
 COMMENTS QUOTED IN THE PRESS WHILE VISITING MISSILE SITES IN UKRAINE
 MARCH 22, 1994

WASHINGTON POST

Mar. 23, 1994

Perry Visits Ukraine's Deadliest Missile Sites

Denuclearization Proceeding, Secretary Says

By Robert Seely
 Special to The Washington Post

KIEV, Ukraine, March 22—Defense Secretary William J. Perry today was shown the two sites where the Soviet Union's deadliest nuclear missiles were constructed and targeted at U.S. cities—the first visit there by a cabinet-level U.S. official.

Perry said he stood "in awe" as he watched two young missile operators at Ukraine's Pervomaisk nuclear rocket complex demonstrate the launch procedure they would have gone through had the Cold War

turned hot. "Those operators had the power to destroy all the major cities in the United States," Perry said.

The defense secretary was speaking on the penultimate day of his week-long tour of Russia and the other three former Soviet republics that were left with nuclear weapons after the breakup of the union. At a news conference here, after his trip to the rocket site, he said that all four republics were making good progress toward reducing or dismantling their vast nuclear arsenals.

In Ukraine, where he spent more time than in the other two repub-

lics—Kazakhstan and Belarus—Perry said that all three of his objectives—to deepen military relations between the two countries, to ensure continued nuclear disarmament and to plan for future actions—had been a success.

Perry and other senior Pentagon officials said that the success in signing several dozen aid agreements between the United States and the former Soviet republics would prove a major help to defending the decision to use more than a billion dollars of U.S. taxpayers' money to help pay for denuclearization in the region.

Perry said that 120 warheads at the Pervomaisk base already had been shipped to Russia for dismantling and other weapons were waiting to go. A hiccup in Perry's upbeat tour, which was caused when a senior Ukrainian politician accused Russia of stalling on its disarmament obligations, would soon be ironed out, Perry said.

After his visit to the base, Perry went on to the Uzhmash factory in the southern town of Dnepropetrovsk whose SS-18 nuclear weapons were considered so deadly, said Perry, that it prompted the United States to embark on the Strategic Defense Initiative, known as "Star Wars," and the development of the MX nuclear missile.

Now, he said, the missile production line at Uzhmash has been shut down.